



About Perspectives Corporation

Perspectives Corporation is a private agency that **supports children, youth, and adults with disabilities in Rhode Island**. It provides a host of services, including Early Intervention, residential care, home-based therapy, employment assistance, and deaf and hard-of-hearing services. Since its founding in 1977, the agency has grown into one of the largest human service agencies in the state.



Challenges

As is common practice in the field of intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), Perspectives traditionally used restraint when adult clients living in 24-hour group homes exhibited aggressive and self-injurious behavior that presented significant risk of injury, either to themselves or others. Over the years, meaningful efforts were made to reduce the use of restraint; however, progress was limited due to how deeply imbedded restraint was within the workplace culture and broader field of adult IDD services.

"To those who think minimizing or even eliminating restraints is not safe, I would say it is not safe to continue using them. Restraints never go as planned, and the risk of serious, life-threatening injury is always there."

CHRISTINE HATHAWAY
Senior Director of Behavioral Health for Adult Services, Perspectives Corporation

In January 2013, Rhode Island passed legislation banning the use of prone restraint for adults with developmental disabilities. Perspectives viewed the new law as an **opportunity to move away from all forms of restraint and coercive interventions.**

Over the next two years, the agency managed to completely eliminate its use of prone restraint, mechanical restraint, and two-person carries. While it had successfully abandoned these most restrictive physical intervention procedures, **it struggled to completely eliminate the use of restraint,** given the challenging and dangerous behaviors of some clients in its care.

Working with Ukeru

In 2015, Perspectives participated in a learning collaborative focused on implementing trauma-informed approaches within the organization. It was through this initiative that Christine Hathaway, Senior Director of Behavioral Health for Adult Services, learned about Ukeru.

“Ukeru was appealing to us as a trauma-informed, hands-off approach,” recalls Hathaway. She and her colleagues were also encouraged by the results Ukeru achieved within its parent company, Grafton Integrated Health Network, which serves a population very similar to that of Perspectives.

After reaching out to Ukeru President Kim Sanders to learn more, Perspectives signed up for a train-the-trainer session in April of 2017. After the first training, staff still showed reluctance and passive opposition to moving toward a hands-off approach to crisis intervention.

“When this started, I thought they were crazy talking about doing away with restraint; but it turned out to be the best thing that could have happened.”

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The leadership within Perspectives responded by actively working to create a climate of change throughout the organization. After a second train-the-trainer session in March 2018, they were ready to move forward.

At that time, Perspectives was opening two new residential programs for individuals who were deaf and hard-of-hearing. A decision was made to only train Ukeru as the crisis prevention and intervention strategy for these two homes. Other established programs, already trained in a crisis intervention program that included restraint, also began receiving training in Ukeru. Each time restraint was used, the incident was debriefed to include how Ukeru may have prevented the use of restraint. Additionally, Ukeru trainers were deployed into programs that were struggling to transition away from hands-on interventions to help problem solve, coach, and support direct care staff.

By September 2018, Perspectives had completely stopped training the old crisis intervention program, which included restraint, for new hires. Previously trained staff were still permitted to use restraints, but only until their annual certification expired. "This created an awkward period of transition," says Hathaway, "but not having a hard end date for the use of restraints minimized fear and resistance among our direct support staff."

"Ukeru has changed the mindset of most people I work with. Now the pads are a second thought compared to a first line of defense... it's a lot more effective to try to talk someone out of having a bad day and fall back on the pads later if the conversation fails to bring them out of a bad place."

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Results

Today, Ukeru is firmly entrenched in the culture of Perspectives. Within three years of adopting Ukeru (2018-2020), **Perspectives' use of restraint fell by over 96%.**

Currently, when there is a threat to health and safety, very brief escorts and same-arm holds are the only hands-on interventions still used to interrupt aggressive or self-injurious behaviors—and these only occur with a small number of individuals as part of an approved behavioral intervention plan. The frequency of use continues to decline as Perspectives makes progress towards eliminating the use of hands-on interventions entirely.

“Accepting the evidence that our training was flawed, and we may have inflicted harm when none was intended, is difficult,” says Hathaway. “But we have to move past our feelings and look to the evidence offered that there is a better way to protect while maintaining dignity and promoting health and well-being for individuals, as well as for the staff who care for them.”

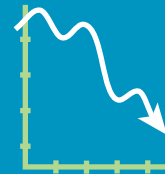
Between 2018 and 2020:

- Physical escorts **dropped 97%**, from 805 to 26 per year.
- Standing holds **fell 96%**, from 231 to 10 per year.
- Use of “seated wraps” **dropped 97%**, from 147 to 4 per year and are no longer permitted.
- Instances requiring the use of blocking pads **fell 94%**, from 349 to 20 per year.

Today, Ukeru is always attempted before resorting to restraints.

97%

Fewer physical escorts



Instances requiring pads fell 94%



Ukeru is always attempted before restraints



Seated wraps are no longer permitted